

## MEMORIAL

### AUGUSTE ROLLIER, M.D.

By F. T. BILLINGS, JR., M.D.

On October 30, 1954, this Association lost an honorary member at the age of eighty, a Physician and Climatologist of note, Doctor Auguste Rollier of Leysin, Switzerland. Doctor Rollier's name is inevitably associated with the treatment of skeletal tuberculosis by heliotherapy.

He was born on October 1, 1874 at St. Aubin, Switzerland. Educated at Zurich and Berne Universities, he was graduated in medicine in 1898, and then spent four years working under Professor Kocher of Berne. It was at this time that his fiancée became seriously ill with tuberculosis. Instead, therefore, of going into surgery at Berne, Rollier in 1903, took up a rural general practice in Leysin hoping that the mountain air would prolong her life. Madame Rollier recovered her health completely.

Rollier was confirmed in his belief in the curative power of fresh air and sunshine by his observations on the clean, rapid healing of wounds sustained by the patients in his practice. Even more important than these observations was his intense interest in the patient as a whole. He emphasized on the one hand nutrition, on the other good morale. He imbued each patient with a feeling of usefulness and enthusiastic self confidence which allowed him to tolerate and successfully combat chronic suppurative tuberculosis of bone.

While some of his ideas which he expressed in a number of books, the best known of which, *Die Heliotherapie der Tuberkulose*, was first published in 1913, did not gain universal acceptance, there is no doubt that many hundreds of patients who came to Leysin, particularly children with tuberculous adenitis and tuberculosis of bones and joints, made remarkable recoveries under his care. Rollier's work earned him international recognition and for many years he was head of the faculty of medicine at Lausanne.

Rollier was nominated for honorary membership in this Association in 1922, and elected in 1923. Historically it is of interest to note that at that time there was a tremendous, if not predominant bias toward climate and tuberculosis demonstrated by the activities of the Association. Thus, the name was still The American Climatological and Clinical Association and the object of this Association was changed between 1922 and 1923 from

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Notes taken from an obituary notice published in the British Medical Journal, Volume 2, page 1169, Nov. 13, 1954.

"The Study of Climatology and hydrology and of diseases of the respiratory organs" to "The Study of disease especially of the respiratory and circulatory organs and of Climatology and Hydrology". At the meeting in 1922, thirty papers were presented of which seven were related to tuberculosis, in 1923, twenty-nine papers, six related to tuberculosis; at the meeting in 1955, one paper out of twenty was related to tuberculosis.

Thus Professor Rollier and his teachings fitted perfectly into the Association at the time of his election. As is true of any really great physician he has remained in harmony with the changing times. His concept of the treatment of each individual patient as a whole whether supplemented with sun or drug is one which will always be fresh, up to date and a stimulating challenge to the maintenance of a proper breadth of vision.